Quick Reference Guide: Student and Staff Feedback

Introduction

The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework is designed to include information about educator practice from a wide and representative range of sources. Student and staff feedback, which is a required element of the regulatory framework, offers a unique and important perspective on educator effectiveness. When taken together with other information sources, staff and student feedback helps to provide a more accurate and detailed picture of an educator's practice.[1]

Educator Evaluation Regulations

603 CMR 35.07. Evidence used in educator evaluation shall include:

- Student feedback collected by the district
- Staff feedback (with respect to administrators) collected by the district

Feedback from students and staff plays a key role in teaching and learning in schools throughout the Commonwealth. Whether it's a third grade teacher using weekly exit slips to gather student input on learning activities, a principal convening a group of teachers to collect feedback on a new initiative, or a librarian canvassing students for opinions about new resources, the use of feedback to shape and refine practice is a familiar idea for many educators.

Student feedback informs teachers' evaluations, and staff feedback informs administrators' evaluations. By including student and staff feedback in the evidence that educators will collect, the Massachusetts' educator evaluation framework ensures that this critical perspective is used to support professional growth and development.

Identifying Feedback Instruments

Districts have flexibility in the identification of feedback instruments for educators. They may choose to implement district-wide feedback instruments, such as student or staff surveys, or they may create processes by which educators and evaluators can identify feedback instruments at the individual educator level. These approaches are not mutually exclusive, and leaders may settle on a combination of district-wide and educator-specific instruments in order to best meet the needs of all educators.

The following principles offer best practices for districts to consider when making decisions about student and staff feedback instruments; they are intended to be applicable regardless of the method for collecting student and/or staff feedback.

- Feedback should be **aligned to one or more** MA Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice or Administrative Leadership so that it yields information that is relevant to an educator's practice.
- Feedback should be **informative and actionable**.
- Instruments must be **accessible to all potential respondents** so that the information they provide allows educators to draw valid conclusions.

[1]Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. 2012. Asking Students About Teaching: Student Perception Surveys and Their Implementation. http://www.metproject.org/downloads/Asking_Students_Practitioner_Brief.pdf. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. 2012. Gathering Feedback for Teaching: Combining High-Quality Observations with Student Surveys and Achievement Gains. http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Practitioner_Brief.pdf.

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ESE Supports and Engagement

ESE's set of model feedback surveys are designed to assist districts in this work. Student feedback surveys for classroom teachers are available for grades 3-12 in standard, short, and mini forms. Staff surveys for school-level administrators are available in standard and short forms.

Visit ESE's Student and Staff Feedback webpage to view and download ESE's Model Student and Staff Surveys!
http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/feedback/

The surveys were designed in accordance with the same key principles of effective feedback outlined above and give districts a feasible, sustainable, cost effective way to collect and report back feedback to educators. Districts may adopt or adapt these surveys, and/or choose to use other feedback instruments.

ESE consulted with a diverse group of stakeholders including students, teachers, school administrators, and district leaders in the development of the model instruments and guidance documents. Survey items were developed, tested, and refined through a rigorous pilot project, a detailed description of which is included in the ESE Survey Pilot Project Summary.

FAQ's

1. ***How does feedback get incorporated into an educator's evaluation?***
   There is no specific weight accorded to or point value associated with feedback in an educator's evaluation. Districts have the flexibility to determine how feedback informs the Summative Performance Rating. Feedback may be gathered at multiple points in the 5-step evaluation cycle and considered formatively, summatively, or both. Based on recommendations from stakeholders and research partners, ESE is recommending feedback be used to inform an educator's self-assessment, shape his or her goal-setting process, and/or demonstrate changes in practice over time. If a district chooses to implement one or more of the ESE model surveys, ESE recommends that the feedback be use formatively in the evaluation framework (steps 1 and 2) until ESE completes additional external validity analyses of the instruments in subsequent years.

2. ***Are districts required to adopt ESE's model survey instruments?***
   No, districts are not required to adopt the model surveys. ESE recognizes that many districts may already have a history of administering student and staff surveys, or may have other feedback instruments they prefer. The model surveys are an available resource, not a requirement.

3. ***Are there other recommended ways of collecting feedback aside from surveys?***
   Yes. While surveys are a widely used method of collecting student and staff feedback, districts are free to choose alternative vehicles for collecting feedback (see Alternative Methods for Collecting Student and Staff Feedback of Part VIII). Districts may conclude that surveys are appropriate for some educator roles, but not all. For example, ESE's model student survey is designed to collect feedback about a student's primary classroom teacher and the model staff survey is designed to collect feedback about a school administrator. If districts choose to use these resources, they will have to adapt or supplement them with other tools in order to collect feedback for other educator roles.

ESE Guidance on Student and Staff Feedback

- ESE Model Feedback Surveys
- Part VIII of ESE's Model System for Educator Evaluation: Using Staff & Student Feedback in the Evaluation Process
- Considerations for Collective Bargaining
- ESE Survey Pilot Project

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